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CHARLESTON GAZETTE

W.Va. water customers complain of higher bills

Some customers of West Virginia American Water are questioning why their bills went up even though they didn't use their tap water for several days after a chemical spill. Although he continues to use bottled water for drinking and cooking, Harry Machado of Winfield said his latest bill was about 40 percent more than the previous one. "We were out of town for two days during the water crisis, and we haven't been using the water for anything but flushing the toilet," Machado told The Charleston Gazette. About 300,000 water customers in nine counties were told not to use their tap water after a Jan. 9 chemical spill from a tank at Freedom Industries went into the Elk River. After tests were conducted over several days, water customers were told to flush out their lines and start using tap water again. Freedom Industries told environmental officials recently that a second, less toxic chemical also was mixed in the tank. West Virginia American Water spokeswoman Laura Jordan said the flushing might account for much of the increase on bills. She said a promised 1,000-gallon credit on water bills for the flushing process hasn't been applied yet because details are being worked out with the state Public Service Commission. "Customers will see that on a future bill," Jordan said. "For some customers, it may be their next bill, and for some, it may be the bill after that." Paul Welker and Loretta and Rex Jividen, all of Dunbar, saw their water bills increase by a few dollars in January. Welker questioned why his bill didn't go down because the water he and his wife didn't use for bathing, washing clothes, drinking and cooking should have more than offset the roughly 400 gallons of water used to flush out the lines. Jordan said January is generally the highest-usage month for customers. She said frigid weather earlier in the month caused a sharp increase in water use because customers left faucets running to keep their lines from freezing. Rex Jividen said he called the water company about his bill and was told his water lines might be leaking. But after checking his meter and putting a dye in his toilet test to make sure it wasn't leaking, he said, "I don't have a leak."

MCHM leak inquiry will take about a year

The federal Chemical Safety Board has not discovered any holes in Freedom Industries' secondary containment wall, but the agency's investigation probably will last a year, and it's too early to know if the wall failed, CSB officials said Friday. A CSB investigative team has been at Freedom Industries, the site of the chemical leak that contaminated the region's drinking water, since Jan. 13, but investigations of this type generally take about a year, CSB lead investigator Johnnie Banks told a special joint legislative committee on water resources. Banks said that the

secondary containment wall, which surrounds the leaky tank, had no defects "that we can observe with the naked eye." He said that if investigators discover anything that requires an immediate recommendation, they will issue one. "There's a sense of urgency in our mission, as well," he said. "We realize that the citizens of this area want to know what happened." Several of the seven lawmakers at the committee hearing were looking for recommendations they could act on within the ongoing 60-day legislative session. After the hearing, Rafael Moure-Eraso, the chairman of the CSB, said that seems unlikely. "We are interviewing people, we are collecting evidence, our tank expert has come to see the place and basically say, 'This is what I'm going to need.' We are getting started," Moure-Eraso said. "We will be able to talk more in six months, perhaps." This is the third time in recent years that the CSB has been in the Kanawha Valley to investigate an incident. Investigators were here in 2008 after an explosion at the Bayer CropScience plant in Institute killed two workers and they were here in 2010 to investigate a series of leaks at the DuPont plant in Belle that killed one worker. The final Bayer report was not issued until Jan. 2011, two and a half years after the explosion. The final DuPont report was issued in July 2007, a year and a half after the leaks. In both those reports, the CSB recommended that West Virginia establish a program to prevent hazardous chemical releases. State officials did not heed either recommendation. Moure-Eraso said that that is the nature of his agency. "We contact them and say, 'This is what we recommend' and we write letters to them and say, 'What are your actions about this,'" Moure-Eraso said. "The power that we have is to say 'It's acceptable' or 'It's unacceptable.' "We go to people like your newspaper and say, 'Look, we make these recommendations, which are public recommendations, and they have to be acted on.'" Delegate Mike Manypenny asked if the CSB's three visits to the region in five years meant that there was a "systemic problem" with chemical maintenance in the Kanawha Valley, and in West Virginia as a whole. "That is a fair statement," Banks said, although he added that West Virginia is not alone in having problems with chemical safety. "We look at how things drift to a state of being, over time, and then there's a catastrophic failure, and the question is, how could that happen?" Banks said. "It evolves over time." Moure-Eraso also said it was the chemical manufacturer's obligation to provide information on the chemicals that leaked into the Elk River and that the information that has been provided has been scant and inadequate. The two leaked chemical compounds -- Crude MCHM and PPH, stripped -- are made by Eastman and Dow chemicals, respectively. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have said the area's water is safe for everyone except pregnant women, with less than 1 part per million of Crude MCHM. Moure-Eraso did not counter that standard, but he did say of Crude MCHM and PPH, stripped, "They shouldn't be in drinking water. Period. At any level."

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

Heat is on for climate action

President Barack Obama's climate change agenda will take a major step forward this year with new rules for curbing carbon pollution. The regulations will help fulfill Obama's promise in last year's State of the Union address to act on climate change if Congress doesn't. As the president prepares to deliver this year's State of the Union speech on Tuesday – and as his critics accuse him of waging a war on coal – members of Delaware's congressional delegation and environmental advocates say he should use the speech to reaffirm his commitment to action on climate change. "The president needs to show leadership and commitment to sticking with it," said Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., who chairs the Senate subcommittee overseeing the Clean Air

Act. “If he does, I think most Americans will decide to follow him, and I hope most of my colleagues.” Rep. John Carney, D-Del., said that, “given the gridlock in Congress,” Obama should continue to do whatever he can on climate change. The other member of the state’s congressional delegation, Democratic Sen. Chris Coons, said the State of the Union is an opportunity for Obama to lay out a vision for what more can be done. “We need to do more as a country to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help vulnerable communities, including many in Delaware, adapt to the changes that have already begun,” Coons said in a statement. Republicans and some Democrats trying to block carbon-emissions regulations say technology that captures the carbon and stores it underground is unproven and expensive. While environmental advocates say a clean-energy economy would create new jobs, critics say regulating emissions will eliminate current jobs and hike electricity costs for consumers. “For struggling middle-class families across Eastern Kentucky, this is just the latest punch in the gut from Washington from an administration whose own advisers seem to believe that a ‘war on coal’ is exactly what’s needed,” Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky said in a Jan. 16 floor speech. The Obama administration says climate change increases the risk of severe weather, which it said did more than \$110 billion in damage in 2012. By June 2013, Superstorm Sandy had required more than \$2.2 million in federal assistance for Delaware, which is at risk from rising sea levels. In June, Obama unveiled a “Climate Action Plan” that most notably detailed steps his administration would take to cut carbon pollution. The Environmental Protection Agency on Jan. 8 published a revised proposal for carbon emission standards for new power plants. The agency is developing a proposal for existing power plants that’s due in June. Power plants account for about one-third of greenhouse gas pollution in the U.S., according to the EPA. Standards for existing power plants will be critical to reducing carbon emissions and will be even more controversial than the rules for new plants, said David Goldston, director of government affairs for the Natural Resources Defense Council. That’s why Obama should use his address to say “there’s no backing away” from the agenda, Goldston said. “We know that those opposed to action on climate change will try to make this a cause celebre,” he said. Obama’s plan includes steps to lead international efforts on climate change, and to prepare the U.S. for it. He has created a Climate Preparedness and Resilience task force with 26 elected officials, including Delaware Gov. Jack Markell, to help the federal government prepare for climate change on the local level. Seventy-five percent of Americans say the U.S. should take action on global warming even if other nations do less, according to a USA TODAY/Stanford University/Resources for the Future poll of 810 adults nationwide released last month. Fifty-five percent of those surveyed – down from 61 percent in 2006 – support federally imposed reductions on greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. In Congress, Obama’s plan is under attack. McConnell has sponsored a resolution, backed by most Senate Republicans, to kill EPA’s proposed carbon-emissions standards for new power plants. He asked the Government Accountability Office on Jan. 16 to review whether Congress could use the Congressional Review Act to overrule the standards before they are finalized. A bill targeting the power plant rules has 66 House co-sponsors. The measure, by Rep. Ed Whitfield, R-Ky., chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Power, and Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., would require the EPA to set carbon emissions standards for new coal-fired power plants based on technology that’s been in use for a year. It would let Congress set the effective date of EPA’s expected regulations for existing plants. Josh Zive, counsel to the Electric Reliability Coordinating Council, a coalition of utilities, said the proposed rule for existing plants has legal problems. Among them: The Clean Air Act requires that new emissions standards be based on

“adequately demonstrated” technology. While the EPA points to success at several carbon-capture-and-sequestration demonstration plants, those projects haven’t been completed and experts say the technology is decades away from commercial viability, he said. “There will be years of litigation,” he said.

GREENWIRE

PEOPLE: EPA loses its 'voice'

Dale Kemery decided at age 6 he wanted to be a radio star. "Every Sunday night I used to glue my ear to the radio," said Kemery, 73, who recalled listening to radio legends Jack Benny, Phil Harris and Alice Faye. "My dad made me a microphone, which was made out of a dowel and a piece of wood -- a piece of two-by-four painted red. I loved my mic." Kemery got started in radio while he was still in high school and worked for about a dozen stations across the country -- with stops in Hagerstown, Md.; Dayton, Ohio; and San Francisco -- in the late 1950s through the early '70s. He played chart-topping songs, broadcast the news and fine-tuned his deep, resonant voice. That voice has become familiar to environmental reporters who have been calling Kemery's line at U.S. EPA for nearly a decade about everything from bed bugs and health hazards of artificial turf to mysterious honeybee deaths. He was a press officer at EPA for about nine years before retiring last month. As a career staffer, he worked for both the George W. Bush and Obama administrations, starting at EPA in 2005. His voice wasn't the principal part of his EPA job, but it was sometimes put to use on official business. When EPA wanted to alert the public about energy "vampires" -- electronics that suck up power even when not being used -- and environmental perils in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, he was the guy. "Look in the shadows of your home -- there could be vampires lurking!" Kemery warns over spooky music in his deep, polished voice in one public service announcement. "They won't drain your blood. ... They're the electronics slowly sucking energy from your home when not in use." And after Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in 2005, his voice was featured in announcements for people in hurricane-damaged areas about how to handle gas leaks, mold and carbon monoxide. Even strangers notice Kemery's voice. People sometimes stop him in public to ask him whether he's on the radio. "I get it from some of the strangest places. Waitresses in restaurants, for example, or people I've just met," he said. And it can get frustrating. "There have been times I've said, 'I'm not my voice.'" He's had speech coaches and gotten some voice training over the years, but at least part of it is genetic. "My dad had a big voice, so I inherited some of that," Kemery said. He sang second bass in the chorus at his high school in Sunbury, Pa. "I wasn't very good, but I could hit those low notes, they liked that. Sixteen-year-olds usually can't hit really low notes." His singing career didn't go far. "Nobody wants to hear me sing. I don't want to hear me sing," he said, laughing. At EPA, part of Kemery's job involved handling floods of reporters' inquiries on busy days, setting up interviews with officials and coordinating with EPA's multimedia and outreach teams. Sometimes when things got busy, he felt like a traffic cop. Some days were "filled with angst," he said in a recent interview. He recalls one day when he fielded 45 telephone calls and emails from the press. Typically, he would get about a half dozen calls in a day, or maybe 15 when he was the contact for a high-profile issue. Everyone from the national and international media to trade press with very specific questions would call him. He enjoyed it, for the most part. "I enjoyed working with most reporters. Having been one myself, I was able to empathize I think a great deal with the things that reporters face," he said. It wasn't always easy to work on other people's timelines. "When it came to short deadlines, that was a different story," he said. "It's a complicated agency, and there are complicated subjects that are involved.

Reporters want things when they want them, and it doesn't always work out because it means having to find the right person to respond to the questions and sometimes it's not easy." 'Great Juan' His radio career had a few things in common with his work at EPA. "Both were fast paced, both often high stress," he said. But working in a wonky federal agency job was a pretty big change from Kemery's early radio gigs, which sometimes involved pranks and shenanigans. He refers to one of his favorite pranks as "The Great Juan Caper." The elaborate scheme took place in 1961, when Kemery -- then in his early 20s and a newly hired disc jockey at a radio station in Albany, N.Y. -- posed as a Bolivian psychic entertainer to drum up publicity for his new radio station. About six weeks after the highly publicized stunt, he lost the job. "They fired me," he said. "Typical radio station." Kemery remembers the time fondly, and he wrote about the stunt for his website. In addition to acting as the "Great Juan," Kemery used the air names "Dale Kelly" and "Tommy Gunn." Kemery put his radio career on hold in 1963 when he went to serve in the Army in Vietnam. He signed up for the Army because he figured the draft would catch up with him, he said. "My reasoning was, I'll show them, I'll enlist. And what I got out of that was an extra year. Draftees were only in for two, but I enlisted, so I was in for three. That showed 'em all right," he said with a laugh. Like other Vietnam War veterans, Kemery experienced some mixed reactions back home after his service. He recalls waiting for a bus in his uniform on Market Street in San Francisco and looking up to realize that people were glaring at him. "The hatred was pouring out of their eyes," he said. "We didn't get a warm welcome when we came home." Still, Kemery doesn't regret his time in Vietnam. "I'm certainly glad I don't have to do it again," he said, "but also glad I had the experience, because I grew up while I was in the Army." He spent a few more years doing radio and going to school when he returned from Vietnam, then landed public relations jobs with the Dairy Council of California and the National Dairy Council in Chicago. He launched a public relations company in the Chicago suburbs, where he lived for about two decades before landing back on the East Coast to work for EPA. Kemery has been volunteering every other weekend at the welcome desk at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum for about five years, pointing out the Wright Brothers gallery, the Spirit of St. Louis and other attractions to visitors. He's thinking about changing his schedule to every weekend now that he's retired, and he might take a cross-country train trip in the spring to see friends in California. He doesn't know how much voice work he wants to do now, but he's considering converting the walk-in closet of his Silver Spring apartment into a sound booth, he said. He has professional equipment, "and the acoustics in there are pretty good."

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

Freedom Industries ordered to remove tanks after spill

West Virginia's governor has ordered the company at the center of a chemical spill that tainted the water supply for the state capital to begin the process of removing all above-ground storage tanks from the Charleston operation. A statement released Saturday by Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin's office says Freedom Industries must start the dismantling process by March 15. The Jan. 9 spill at Freedom Industries contaminated the water supply for 300,000 West Virginians. The order to dismantle and properly dispose of the tanks also includes associated piping and machinery. The facility currently has 17 tanks. The governor's order was included in a consent order issued Friday by the state Department of Environmental Protection and signed by Freedom Industries. The company has already been ordered to remove almost 1 million gallons of chemicals from the plant.

WHEELING INTELLIGENCER

Company Knew Of Second Chemical

The company at the center of the West Virginia water crisis immediately knew a second chemical leaked from its plant into the Elk River, and told its workers in an e-mail, according to a state environmental official. However, Freedom Industries did not let state government officials know about the second chemical right away. And state environmental department official Mike Dorsey said Thursday that most company employees did not skim far enough into the e-mail to see that information. It's unclear who sent the e-mail or how many of the company's 51 employees it reached. Dorsey made the remarks on MetroNews radio, explaining the 12-day delay in the second chemical's disclosure. He could not be reached for comment Friday. "The explanation I was given was that they had the information on the very first day," said Dorsey, chief of the state environmental agency's homeland security and emergency response division. "It was in an e-mail that was being shared among company employees, but no one read far enough down the page to see that." Freedom Industries President Gary Southern showed Dorsey the e-mail Wednesday. Southern "remarked that it should've been brought to his attention but wasn't," Dorsey wrote in an e-mail Friday. A chemical used to clean coal spilled from the tank into the river Jan. 9. About 300,000 people couldn't drink or bathe in the water for almost a week. Southern told environmental officials this week that a second, less toxic chemical also was mixed in the tank. A call to Freedom Industries was not returned Friday. Those are the only chemicals that spilled, the company wrote to state regulators Thursday. The state tested for the second chemical, stripped PPH, at the water plant and scoured older tests for the substance, but found no traces. Testing will continue. A top investigator with the Chemical Safety Board also weighed in on the spill in front of a state legislative water policy committee Friday. The federal board is one of many government entities investigating the Charleston spill. Investigator Johnnie A. Banks said it will likely take a year until the board produces a report with findings. The panel can, however, set up public meetings to share periodic updates. The meetings would take place in Charleston, he said. When state environmental inspectors showed up at Freedom Industries Jan. 9, they described a chemical, crude MCHM, oozing from the pierced tank through a cracked containment wall into the river. But Banks didn't depict any fatal flaws when his team arrived Jan. 13. He also said a hard freeze might have helped create the 1-inch hole in the tank that leaked, which Freedom Industries has theorized. "There was nothing that jumped out at you that said this containment was inadequate or that the tank is going to fail," Banks told reporters. On Tuesday, Freedom Industries reached a bankruptcy court deal for up to \$4 million in credit from a lender to help continue operations, an attorney said. The bankruptcy filing freezes dozens of lawsuits against Freedom Industries. Many are by local businesses owners who say they lost money during a water-use ban that lasted several days. Under state orders, the company still needs to relocate almost 1 million gallons of other chemicals at its Charleston plant.

Ohio, Pennsylvania Have Tougher Storage Regulations

If West Virginia had storage tank regulations in place similar to those in neighboring Ohio and Pennsylvania, the Jan. 9 chemical spill that left 300,000 residents in nine counties without access to potable water for days may have been averted. The spill released 7,500 gallons of a chemical known as MCHM from a Freedom Industries storage facility into the Elk River near Charleston, 1.5 miles upstream from West Virginia American Water's intake. On Monday, West Virginia Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin announced new legislation to implement an above ground storage tank regulation program. Neighboring states such as Ohio and Pennsylvania already regulate the

storage facilities. Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection spokesman John Poister said a massive leak at an Ashland Oil Co. storage facility on Jan. 2, 1988, in that state promoted lawmakers to enact rigid storage tank regulations. Ohio also has rules, but nothing specific to tanks located along waterways that feed public water treatment facilities. Poister said his state's regulations went into effect in August 1989 after the Ashland Oil leak, which sent 700,000 gallons of diesel fuel into the Monongahela River and affected the drinking water for about 1 million residents in Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio. Water authorities along the Monongahela and Ohio Rivers were able to shut off municipal water intakes until the spill dissipated near Cincinnati. "We have a pretty comprehensive storage tank regulation in place," Poister said. "It could happen again, but, hopefully, our regulations and vigilance are strong enough that we do not get that kind of impact." He said every storage tank in the state must be registered and permitted to ensure that DEP inspectors know about them. Poister said tank farms - a name given to areas where groups of tanks are located - must have a secondary containment system that will hold more than what is housed in the tanks themselves. "They are designed to capture anything that leaks out and must hold 110 percent of the volume of the largest tank in the farm," he said. "DEP regulations require that all tanks are painted and have no visible signs of rust." Poister said the ruptured Ashland Oil tank was old and a fault could have been spotted had there been a regular inspection and maintenance program at the time. "Another Pennsylvania regulation provides that tank owners must have an approved preparedness, prevention and contingency plan and/or a spill prevention control and counter measure plan for each tank," he said. "Each plan has to be approved by DEP." He said there have been no major spills forcing people to go into water conservation mode and no catastrophic tank failures since the regulations went into effect. Another area covered by regulations deals with impoundments. "They are under a different set of regulations," Poister said. "They must be lined so the fluid does not get into ground water. Secondary containment requirements extend to the natural gas well pads. That is accomplished with a moat-like containment around the well pads." He said DEP still encounters storage tank violations and those companies are subject to potential fines if the infractions are serious. In Ohio, tank regulations fall under the state Environmental Protection Agency's Division of Drinking and Ground Waters. "We have a storage tank inspection program, but not a universal program that specifically addresses tanks along shorelines or waterways," agency spokeswoman Linda Oros said. She said the state's division of air pollution control does tank inspections primarily to monitor air leaks or gas breaches. "We also check for obvious problems with liquid leaks and they are noted as an area of concern," she said. Oros said OEPA inspects tanks used to store drinking water and tanks holding chemicals used to purify water at municipal plants. "For large tanks near waterways, we have a berm requirement," she said. "It is more of a containment program that must hold more volume than the tanks hold. Petroleum-type tanks are monitored by the state fire marshal's office."

CHESAPEAKE BAY JOURNAL

Virginia environmental directors named

David Paylor re-appointed head of Environmental Quality; Joe Elton interim head of Conservation and Recreation David Paylor, Director of the Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, will continue on in the position he has held since his appointment in 2006 by Governor Tim Kaine. Virginia code states that the agency director "serves at the pleasure of the governor," so every administration change is an opportunity for changes in agency direction. Paylor has served Virginia government since 1973, when he began as a field

biologist for the State Water Control Board, one of the predecessor agencies of DEQ, which manages regulatory and pollution prevention programs for air, water, waste, and coastal zones, including the Chesapeake Bay. In 2013, DEQ assumed responsibility for managing stormwater runoff from urban and suburban sources and non-point source pollution from permitted agricultural sources, a function previously coordinated by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). On January 9, 2014, Joe Elton assumed the position of Interim Director of DCR, which oversees non-point source pollution management through the soil and water conservation districts. DCR also provides state management of natural heritage assets, land conservation activities, dam safety, environmental education, and state parks and recreation areas. Elton most recently was DCR's division director for state parks, widely recognized as one of the best systems in the country. During 2013, the soil and water conservation districts, which provide technical services and administer federal cost share funding for agricultural (and more recently, urban) run-off management, were caught in limbo between the two state agencies. While the regulatory stormwater programs transferred from DCR to DEQ, a legislative committee held a series of listening sessions around Virginia to help decide whether the conservation districts and their largely voluntary programs should also be transferred to DEQ. No action was taken at the end of these sessions, and it is widely assumed that the conservation districts will continue to be a program under DCR. Interim Director Elton said that after these sessions, the districts and the legislative leaders realized that they should stay under the umbrella of DCR, "but we have to restore a collaborative relationship." He said that the program to develop resource management plans and the staff to review them is key to meeting Virginia's Chesapeake Bay cleanup commitments. While Paylor's reappointment as director of DEQ is certain, it is unclear why Elton's is being labeled interim. Both agency heads are key to protection of Virginia's natural resources and the Chesapeake Bay.

BALTIMORE SUN

Howard watershed 'academy' seeks recruits to carry message of bay ...

It all comes down to slowing the flow. By training residents to be savvy environmental leaders who can inspire their neighbors to take action, a nonprofit organization hopes to reduce the flow of polluted stormwater runoff that eventually empties into the Chesapeake Bay. The Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy — which just graduated its first class two months ago — is recruiting for a second class of volunteers interested in learning how to improve the water quality of local streams and rivers, which ultimately impacts the bay's health. "Slow the flow" is the popular mantra among those who are passionate about helping people understand the positive impact they can have on the bay, said Sylvia Huestis, a master watershed steward and member of the nonprofit's advisory committee. And there is a lot of water flowing into the Chesapeake. Approximately 51 billion gallons empty into the bay each day from its freshwater tributaries, according to the group's website. There are currently eight stewards in the county, and organizers are hoping to more than triple that number starting Feb. 7, when a 15-session intensive course begins. Applications, which can be completed online at howardwsa.org, are due Jan. 28. The Howard County group joins other watershed stewards academies in the area — one in Anne Arundel County, on which Howard's is modeled, and another that covers Montgomery and Prince George's counties and Washington. Training enables certified stewards to teach other residents how to protect the county's watersheds, which are areas of land that drain into specific bodies of water. Designing rain gardens to absorb and filter groundwater is one example of a

homeowner project that can help keep runoff — and the chemicals, nutrients and pollutants it contains — out of local rivers and streams. Such measures are not new to the county. The Columbia Association began applying best management practices to its 20 sub-watersheds after the Columbia Watershed Management Plan was completed in 2009. What is new is the establishment of an organization dedicated solely to educating residents who can pass on what they learn to their communities, Huestis said. "One of the things that has made watershed work difficult is that there is no volunteer group dedicated to our specific watersheds," said Huestis, who is 70 and a retired Howard County science teacher. Patapsco Heritage Greenway volunteers are known in the area for holding frequent stream cleanups and designing other projects to preserve and protect the Patapsco Valley, she said. But the valley lies mostly in Baltimore County, so much of Howard isn't under the group's jurisdiction, she noted. Howard's advisory committee members are especially excited about the benefits that disseminating knowledge will bring to protecting the watersheds of the Middle Patuxent, Little Patuxent and Patapsco rivers. The Howard County academy works side by side with the Columbia Association's watershed manager, John McCoy, and consults with the county's Office of Environmental Sustainability. The county awarded the group a \$10,000 grant for fiscal year 2014 that will cover costs of in-the-ground projects required of watershed stewards to complete their certification. The organization's advisory committee also includes the University of Maryland Extension in Howard County, the Center for Watershed Protection and the Howard County Legacy Leadership Institute for the Environment. Another impetus for starting the academy is the fact that many people aren't aware of the direct connection between their properties' stormwater runoff and the bay, Huestis said. Neighborhood storm drains, which control localized flooding from runoff, are often dumping sites for things like used motor oil, she said. And many people don't realize the pesticides and fertilizers they use can run off plants and lawns after a rainstorm and end up in those drains. Rachel Beebe, stormwater aide in the county's environmental sustainability office, said the instruction really makes a deep impression on people. "Once they get educated, they don't want to [apply fertilizers and pesticides] anymore," she said. "They learn they can tolerate a bug or two." Beebe is also working with the county's "relatively new" residential watershed protection credit and reimbursement program for installing rain management techniques, she said. Eligible homeowners can apply for a one-time, lump-sum payment of up to 50 percent of their expenses, or for a 20 percent credit against the annual watershed protection fee. The 64,000-square-mile Chesapeake Bay watershed — into which local sub-watersheds eventually empty — is the largest on the Atlantic seaboard and includes much of Virginia and Maryland, according to the group's website. It also includes parts of West Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York, as well as all of Washington. The Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy follows a five-step program that starts with identification of pollution sources. Subsequent steps range from creating pollution reduction strategies to installing projects that curb the stormwater volume infiltrating streams. Terry Matthews, who was hired in December as part-time coordinator for the academy, said he will focus on finding grant money to accomplish the group's goals, and on helping the advisory committee build capacity. "Howard County, in my mind, has done its homework," said Matthews, a Baltimore County resident. "Now we need citizens to step up because we can't do it without them." Huestis agreed, saying, "The success of this effort depends on individual people taking responsibility." Chesapeake Bay talk. The Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy will host an evening with Nicholas DiPasquale, director of the Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Jan. 30 at the Howard County Conservancy, 10520 Old Frederick Road, Woodstock. He will speak on

what residents can do to clean their water, and there be opportunities to ask questions and voice concerns. Admission is free, but attendance is limited to the first 100 registrants at howardwsa.org.

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

Anglers worry about lack of striped bass

Jake Hiles' voice cracks with frustration and worry. He's concerned about marina and hotel owners, restaurant employees and the guy at the tackle shop — and about his welfare and that of other anglers. "I'm just trying to feed my child," said Hiles, owner and captain of Matador Charters. "My business is down at least 30 percent, and that hurts." A lack of striped bass — the popular species also known as rockfish that has been virtually nonexistent in legal Virginia and North Carolina coastal waters the past two winters — has taken a toll on the area's recreational fishing industry. The Mid-Atlantic Rockfish Shootout — a tournament that held its 11th event this month — has seen only one fish brought to the scales in the past two years. Because that development often requires replacing grass and trees, which filter harmful chemicals from water runoff, with asphalt and buildings, more chemically-laden water reaches the waterways and is carried into the ecosystem. The issues are different in this region, according to reports by the Ohio River Watershed Foundation and the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed Coalition. The Connoquenessing and Slippery Rock Creek watersheds are, collectively, part of the Ohio River Watershed. Slippery Rock Creek, which originates in northern Butler County, flows into the Connoquenessing Creek just below the First Bridge in Ellport. The Connoquenessing's source is near Butler, Butler County, and flows into Beaver County at Marion Township and forms the boundary between North Sewickley and Franklin townships before flowing into Ellwood City, cutting the borough in half. The stream goes into the Beaver River at Rock Point, Wayne Township. The Beaver River, which drains more than 3,000 square miles, flows into the Ohio River at Rochester. According to reports compiled by the Ohio River Watershed Foundation, dumping of pollution, acid mine runoff from now-closed coal mines and agricultural runoff are the primary problems along the watershed, which is home to more than 25 million people. Impaired sections of Slippery Rock Creek watershed do not include the stretch closest to the creek's terminus in Lawrence County. But further upstream, acid mine runoff has caused problems in the creek. The watershed coalition has 11 projects to alleviate the pollution issue. One of the most common ways to address acid mine drainage is with the creation of limestone leach beds. Limestone, a natural alkali substance, is used to neutralize the acidic water runoff.

ELLWOOD CITY LEDGER

Report: 2500 miles of waterway across Pa. pollution-impaired

A report issued last week by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation indicated that nearly 2,500 miles of the state's waterways are impaired due to pollution, but even though those streams and rivers throughout the state have the same statuses, the sources of pollution are different. The impaired designation includes about 200 miles of waterways in the Slippery Rock Creek watershed, which drains parts of Butler and Lawrence counties and supplies drinking water to Ellwood City and the surrounding area on public water service, according to a 2008 report by the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed Coalition. By definition, impaired waterways do not meet water-quality standards and will not even after technology-based standards are fully applied to the relevant point sources of pollution. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation indicates that the greatest pollution threat in southeastern Pennsylvania stems from development-related runoff, which carries oil and

other chemicals from roads and buildings. Because that development often requires replacing grass and trees, which filter harmful chemicals from water runoff, with asphalt and buildings, more chemically-laden water reaches the waterways and is carried into the ecosystem. The issues are different in this region, according to reports by the Ohio River Watershed Foundation and the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed Coalition. The Connoquenessing and Slippery Rock Creek watersheds are, collectively, part of the Ohio River Watershed. Slippery Rock Creek, which originates in northern Butler County, flows into the Connoquenessing Creek just below the First Bridge in Ellport. The Connoquenessing's source is near Butler, Butler County, and flows into Beaver County at Marion Township and forms the boundary between North Sewickley and Franklin townships before flowing into Ellwood City, cutting the borough in half. The stream goes into the Beaver River at Rock Point, Wayne Township. The Beaver River, which drains more than 3,000 square miles, flows into the Ohio River at Rochester. According to reports compiled by the Ohio River Watershed Foundation, dumping of pollution, acid mine runoff from now-closed coal mines and agricultural runoff are the primary problems along the watershed, which is home to more than 25 million people. Impaired sections of Slippery Rock Creek watershed do not include the stretch closest to the creek's terminus in Lawrence County. But further upstream, acid mine runoff has caused problems in the creek. The watershed coalition has 11 projects to alleviate the pollution issue. One of the most common ways to address acid mine drainage is with the creation of limestone leach beds. Limestone, a natural alkali substance, is used to neutralize the acidic water runoff.